

Vermont Climate Council October 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: October 17, 2022 11:00 AM
Location: Zoom Meeting recorded and [posted online](#)
Members Present: Anson Tebbetts, Bram Kleppner, Catherine Dimitruk, Chad Farrell, Chris Company, Erica Bornemann, Jared Duval, Johanna Miller, Julie Moore, June Tierney, Kelly Klein, Kristin Clouser, Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Lily Terry, Liz Miller, Michele Boomhower (in place of Sec. Flynn), Richard Cowart, Sean Brown

Staff and support: Jane Lazorchak, David Plumb, Marian Wolz

Minutes Prepared by: Cameron Hager and David Plumb

11:00 AM Convene/Welcome/Overview and Approval of Agenda
Kristin Clouser, Agency of Administration & David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute

Agenda approved by the Council.

11:05 AM Review and Approval of Sept. 12 [minutes](#)
David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute

The minutes were approved by the Council.

11:10 AM Just Transition Reflection- [Justice40 Initiative](#)
Maggie Gendron, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Natural Resources

Maggie Gendron, Deputy Secretary of VT ANR, delivered a presentation on the Justice40 initiative. She gave an overview of the executive order where it creates a government wide goal of delivering 40 percent of the overall benefits of relevant to disadvantaged communities and tracks performance toward that goal through the establishment of an Environmental Justice Scorecard. The Deputy Secretary explained that there are still unanswered questions about how the initiative is operating, but they are working towards finding ways the Justice40 Initiative can work within the Climate Council.

11:25 AM Council Budget Recommendations
Sub-Committee Chairs and David Plumb, CBI

Each subcommittee summarized their recommendations followed by discussion with the full council. Key points of discussion are recorded below:

Ag. and Ecosystems

- The co-chairs of the subcommittee emphasized that most of the recommendations focused on providing more resources to important programs that already exist.
- The dollar amount for supporting the Just Transitions Subcommittee work is old and probably should be deleted.
- Regarding the Climate Curriculum, the dollar amount is viewed as seed funding to start on 2 or 3 recommendations in the CAP regarding climate curriculum.
- For the money on mapping and data analysis, there still needs to be a conversation with the land conservation community. The lead on that work isn't yet determined and the budget attached to that item is not fully scoped.

Just Transitions

- Public engagement is the priority, particularly direct dialogue with front-line and impacted communities. It's time to start learning by doing.
- The engagement should consider the timing and sequence of the Council's work, as right now the Council is in a period of implementation, but in a few years the Climate Action Plan will be updated.
- Council members suggested having a broader conversation on outreach and engagement at a meeting in the future.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation

- A question was asked if there was enough funding for water and wastewater. The funding was clarified as the amount is only for the assessment phase does not include any actual capital costs.

Science and Data

- Council members expressed enthusiasm over looking at social science and data.
- Council members requested that anything that goes into biofuels to include members of the agricultural community.

Cross-Sector

- The subcommittee did not focus on implementation budgets. The co-chairs of the subcommittee emphasized that two kinds of foundational work need to happen: outreach and inclusion along with inventory work and impact assessment.
- The subcommittee would like the Council to say that it needs a substantial amount of administrative and coordination support for the Vermont Climate Council to do its work. They are concerned that with the establishment of the Climate Office that the Council will be understaffed.

12:40 PM PUBLIC COMMENT

Two members of the public made comments which included:

- The Council should discuss who is making presentations on its behalf and add structure to how the Council is operating. It feels opaque at the moment.
- Requests to join the Biomass Task Group were never responded to. The process to join these groups was unclear and led to people feeling left out and unable to participate fully at meetings.
- What happened to the idea of asking the legislature to revisit the Global Warming Solutions Act.
- Funds should be given to actions as well as for more studies.
- When will the lifecycle analysis will be done.

12:50 PM BREAK

1:08 PM Reflection on Public Comment
David Plumb, CBI

Council members were given the opportunity to reflect on what they heard during the Public Comment period. There were no reflections from Council members.

1:13 Continuation of Council Budget Recommendations

After reviewing the budget recommendations, the Council decided to craft a cover memo. Any changes to the subcommittee memos should be made and returned to Jane Lazorchak, ahead of attaching them to the cover memo. A date for that process will be discussed. Key points of the discussion on the Cover Memo are below:

- Should be a relatively short document
- Signal support for the individual documents attached
- Include a handful of summary paragraphs:
 - Importance of JT engagement recommendations for whole process
 - Getting better data
 - Other summary bullets on recommendations
- Clear request for funding to support the council's work. Have dedicated support for council operations and coordination.
 - If we're going to continue to have the level of activity we've had, we'll need the level of support we had previously.
 - We are in the process of defining our roles in the next phase. Considering engagement commitment and unfinished work in the climate plan, we still see a need for continued work.
 - The support we have been getting – organizing meetings, taking notes, posting document, and the coordination amongst all the different pieces is critical.
- Note that admin members recused themselves

1:35 PM Biomass Task Group Draft Conclusions

Drafting Leads, Biomass Task Group

Liz Miller led a discussion on the Biomass Task Group Draft Conclusions. Key points of the discussion are recorded below:

- The Task Group cannot promise a delivery date, but if the Council would like a recommendation by November, then they can see what they do.
- Council members are seeking to move quickly to a resolution given how important the biomass subject is to the Council.
- Council members suggested bringing together a joint subcommittee meeting to discuss the Biomass Task Group recommendations before moving forward to a full-council meeting to expedite the process knowing how important this issue is to many Council members.

1:50 PM Public Comment

Two members of the public made comment, which included:

- The Biomass task group should be more of a biofuel task group considering how many of their discussions fall under that banner. The task group and Council should not wait till after the lifecycle analysis is done to advance recommendations. The task group should continue working.

2:00 PM Adjourn

##